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ABSTRACT

This topical paper summarizes the variety of responses made by individual junior college presidents to the demands (position papers) of black student activists. The first section of the report presents the presidents' attitudes, illustrated in part by their own statements. The second section presents a selected number of presidents' formal responses to the black students' demands. A formal response pattern evolved in which replies followed the same format as the demands that were presented. The relative success of black activists is due to: (1) the administrators' fear of violence; (2) the possibility that violence might lead to race riots; and (3) the willingness of black students to resort to violence to obtain concessions. Most of the black junior college presidents who have been appointed in the last five years might be considered the beneficiaries of activism. While they have as little control as white presidents over the major social forces contributing to the unrest among blacks, they can bring to the college a greater sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of black students. Other related documents by the author are ED 041 578 and ED 042 453. (CA)

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THE PRESIDENT'S REACTION TO BLACK STUDENT ACTIVISM

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TOPICAL PAPERS

1. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education. July 1968. Out of print. ED 022 479 (MF $.25; HC $1.85)

2. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education; Number 2: Attitude Assessment. November 1968. Out of print. ED 026 050 (MF $.25; HC $1.15)

3. Student Activism and the Junior College Administrator: Judicial Guidelines. December 1968. $1.20.

4. Students as Teachers. January 1969. $.55.

5. Is Anyone Learning to Write? February 1969. $.70.

6. Is It Really a Better Technique? March 1969. Out of print. ED 030 410 (MF $.25; HC $1.15)

7. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education; Number 3: Concept Formation. August 1969. Out of print. ED 032 072 (MF $.25; HC $1.00)

8. The Junior College in International Perspective. January 1970. $1.00.

9. Identifying the Effective Instructor. January 1970. $.85.

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FOREWORD

Topical Paper Number 12, The Position Papers of Black Student Activists, presented and discussed copies of student demands. This Paper summarizes the variety of responses made by the college presidents to the various demands.

For those wishing additional material on student activism, the following Clearinghouse publications are available from ERIC:

1. Gaddy, Dale. Student Activism and the Junior College Administrator: Judicial Guidelines. Topical Paper No. 3, December 1968. ED 026 039 (MF $.25; HC $2.75) Also available from Students' Store - Mail Out for $1.20.

2. Gaddy, Dale; Lombardi, John; et al. "Student Activism in Junior Colleges." Junior College Research Review, 4:9; May 1970. ED 038 963 (MF $.25; HC $.90)

3. Lombardi, John. Student Activism in Junior Colleges: An Administrator's View. Monograph No. 6, April 1969. ED 028 767 (MF $.50; HC $4.25)

4. Gaddy, Dale. The Scope of Organized Student Protest in Junior Colleges. Washington, D. C.: AAJC, 1970. Available from the publisher for $2.00. ERIC document number to be announced.

THE PRESIDENT'S REACTION TO BLACK STUDENT ACTIVISM

John Lombardi

During the period of black student activism on junior college campuses, reactions to the militants' demands differed among the various groups affected--faculty, presidents, trustees, and student body officers. In a previous paper (4), the author described the reactions of faculty; in this account, he will focus on the individual president's reaction or response to the demands and his attitude toward black student activism.

Strategy. In most campus incidents, presidents were the first to be confronted by the militants' demands and, as might be expected, they reacted in a variety of ways depending on (1) their personal attitudes toward the Black Power Movement, (2) their attitudes toward student participation in governance, (3) their courage, (4) the strength of the black student organization, (5) the support they could expect from the faculty, the board of trustees, the community, and, to a minor degree, the white students, and (6) their fear that resistance might lead to racial conflict.

At first, when confronted with black student demands, administrators believed that the usual treatment accorded students, respectful but non-committal, would satisfy the black leaders. In some colleges, this seemed to end the matter, but in others, it marked the beginning of a series of confrontations featured by the presentation of demands, often followed by destruction of property, assaults, sit-ins, and boycotts.

A review of confrontations fails to reveal any particular pattern of response that had a high probability of success. In some colleges, a hard line seemed successful; in others, it led to increased militancy. The conciliatory approach proved no more successful. Toward the end of the spring 1969 semester, however, the stand taken by presidents toward the militants hardened as a result of public pressure for a firmer approach to campus disorders--but by then the movement had spent its force and subsided.

Before describing the process of answering the demands, a few remarks are in order concerning the attitude of student body officers, faculty, and boards of trustees. In the beginning, faculty groups did not participate prominently in the process, but as the demands began to affect interests close to them--such as removal of instructors for racist activities, participation in the selection and evaluation of faculty, review of grading practices, and similar subjects--they also prepared position papers, usually in support of the president. Occasionally, the student body officers responded and took a stand, though nearly always in a secondary role. Boards of trustees, with a few notable exceptions, were the last to become involved in this process--and then usually only as a result of black student appearances at meetings, appeals from faculty groups, public pressure, and/or normal communications from the president.

The Presidents' Responses. This section will be divided into two parts. The first part will present the presidents' attitudes, illustrated, as much as possible, by their own statements. The second part will present a selected number of the responses to the black student demands that formed the rallying cry of the militants.

Part I: Public Relations Bulletins.

Besides responding formally to the student demands, presidents also issued information bulletins to college

personnel and press releases to the news media. Occasionally, one wrote an article. In these documents, they tried to soft-pedal the seriousness of the incidents by pointing out the small number of students involved in contrast to the large number of students who continued to go to classes, implying that the latter were indifferent to or not in sympathy with the dissidents. Presidents did not explain why so few students were able to paralyze the colleges' operations and wring such significant concessions from them. In a few instances, these communications reflected the presidents' relief that an amicable settlement had been reached without serious damage to property or personal assault.

More than one president expressed pride in the students for carrying out a sit-in or a demonstration in a peaceful and orderly manner (13), or gratitude "that a peaceful settlement of a boycott had been achieved through meaningful discussion" and that he and the students "were able to talk intelligently about . . . differences and to meet them head on" (Olive Harvey College).

Only a president who knew he had the support of his board could have told a reporter:

> The BSU really is concerned about the welfare of the school. In regard to their demands for a black trustee in place of a white one, what else were they to do? People accept the right of a labor union to shut down a restaurant that doesn't meet its demands. What's the difference? (11).

At another time, the president's reaction was different. He described black militant tactics as "the continual abandonment of one bargaining position for another, the reneging on a publicly announced agreement, the rude, intemperate disruption of a meeting--to present its (BSU) demands and the issuance of a series of public utterances without any attempt to coordinate these with the represen-

tations of the other group."*

How exasperating this arrogance must have been to presidents may be gathered from the reply of one of them who felt "obliged to make two points" to the BSU:

> a. I do not like the term 'demand.' I would much prefer the term 'request.'
>
> b. 'Request' is a two-way street. Rather than barging into my office, especially when I am having a meeting with another person or group, I would request that you make an appointment that is mutually acceptable.**

Another college president told the BSU representatives he could accept their demands only as requests. In each of the series of demands, he "changed the word 'demand' to 'request' . . . while they were present and witnessed his action."***

Another source for presidents' reactions is the occasional article. President Edward H. Redford of Merritt College, Oakland, California, describes candidly a tumultuous and trying experience, yet throughout he maintains a sympathetic attitude toward the activist. He writes:

> As one gets to this point in telling what Merritt is, he cannot help but suspect that those who do not know the place already are critically rejecting what must seem to be anarchy. Quite likely, they may well doubt that "education" is

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*Memorandum to: All Students, Faculty, and Staff; From: Ed D. Erickson; Re: Board-BSU Negotiations; May 21, 1969, p. 2.

**East Los Angeles College. Memorandum to: Black Student Union; From: John K. Wells; Subject: Response to Demands of December 11, 1968; Dated: December 12, 1968.

***Letter, February 6, 1969, to Mr. D. Dale Dooley, Assistant Superintendent, Student Personnel, Mt. San Antonio College; Subject: Black Student Union.

possible in such an environment. And we must admit that sometimes a faculty member, an administrator, a student, and especially some parents, cannot take the excitement and find they want to try more peaceful waters. We think, however, that real education is going on at Merritt. Our biggest challenge we feel is to provide for the ultimate of freedom but, at the same time, to guarantee that it is being used to educate rather than merely to advocate or demonstrate or protest.

We do not argue that this is the only or even the best way to run a college, and probably for another school it might be an entirely undesirable one. At Merritt, we have merely attempted to capitalize on a situation which would have come about despite anything we might have wanted to do otherwise and to make educational profit out of what some might consider a problem condition (10).

In the same spirit, in an interoffice communication to the Chancellor of the District, President Redford, while admitting that "the most serious problem . . . is the inability of the 'establishment' and the dissenting groups to communicate, to understand each other," pointed out that "some ambiguities in the laws" make it difficult for administrators to deal effectively with disruptive activities. A case in point, he added, is "the matter of whether junior college students can be 'expelled' or 'excluded' or whether their registration can be refused or even cancelled sometime during the term." The concluding paragraph, however, ends on a note of sympathy, tolerance, and the need "to gain the insight and the understanding and the willingness to continue trying to serve the needs of our minorities."*

Most often the president disclosed his feelings at a faculty meeting, in a report to the board, or in answer to the demands of the black student organization.

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*Edward H. Redford to John Dunn. "Requested Memo on Certain Conditions at Merritt," January 1, 1968, p. 11.

In an unusually perceptive analysis of the serious racial conflict that occurred on her campus, the vice-president and president-elect of Mt. San Antonio College told the faculty:

> For the first time, our campus community underwent a serious crisis. All of us have invested and implemented here our highest ideals--ideals that contribute to personal and social maturation. We find these ideals threatened. What is it that we fear--that threatens our security?
>
> 1. the changing nature of the student body, particularly with reference to ethnic backgrounds
>
> 2. pressure of social problems that are increasingly and graphically becoming our problems
>
> 3. the change in the student's traditional attitude toward authority
>
> 4. the increase in questioning of the relevance of our procedures and of our goals
>
> 5. increase in overt violence as a means of achieving power
>
> 6. the demand of students to be more fully involved in the process of education
>
> 7. the sudden risk of personal physical harm
>
> 8. and last and most serious--the fear of fear itself.
>
> For whatever reasons this is happening, we must, above all else, be aware of the changes and be responsive to the challenge. We, as educators, have not been trained in the area of power confrontation. I personally have sought out and received suggestions from experts in these areas since our crisis in order to understand and select the adequate action.

The Fresno president's "Response to 'Black Student Union Demands'" is also sympathetic and conciliatory. Repeating a statement he had made a week earlier to a Mexican-American student group, he admitted that:

> The demands . . . reflect . . . a deep concern for the goals of self-assertion, self-direction, and self-determination, all of which characterize the free man and reaffirm his individual dignity and worth.

He believed that Fresno City College, along with community colleges in general, had "the obligation to recognize these goals and to commit itself to them."

These sympathetic comments were more than perfunctory compliments to the black students and their leaders. Taken out of context, they do not show that for hours, days, and weeks, the militants had kept the college from functioning, that property was damaged, and that personnel were assaulted. These encomiums seemed like awards for meritorious service to the college. In another sense, they were justifications for the president's capitulation. To survive a confrontation, of course, was a noteworthy accomplishment for a president, for many of them did not.

The more common responses also contained statements of understanding and sympathy, and a desire to help the black students, but were counterbalanced with warnings that violence or encroachments on the administrative and faculty prerogatives would not be tolerated. Six illustrations follow:

1. Macomb County Community College

At Macomb College (Michigan), the district president, in his "President's Recommendations Concerning Requests of the Association for Black Students," organized his report in four parts "to aid the Board of Trustees in the exercise of their policy-making functions in a complex and volatile decision-making field . . . ." After an

Introduction and Background, in which he stated that the issue of racism was "dealt with in the same fashion as other issues . . . through open discussion and debate involving students, faculty and administrative staff," he outlined a set of Principles of Community Relations with Specific Reference to Economic, Ethnic, Political, Racial and Religious Aspects. He urged the Board to develop and adopt them as a principled philosophy that would serve as guide for the institution as periodic requests are made of it. "Unless such a set of principles exists, the institution will be reacting to special-interest claims without coherent and comprehensive guidelines." The principles on which he was acting and which he urged the Board to accept were: (1) adherence to equality of educational opportunity, by reaching out to encourage all eligible to enroll; (2) that "student body, faculty, and administrative staff should reflect a cosmopolitan nature"; (3) that, in appointment of staff, the procedure of selection by faculty and administration be adhered to; and (4) that, since control of the institution is vested by law in the Board of Trustees and its appointed professional staff, the Board not shirk its responsibility and reject sharing its authority with any group that is not susceptible to public control. Advisory groups should be encouraged, but "to allow any non-professional group--economic, political, religious, or racial--to control the curriculum, or any part of it, would be to degrade and prostitute the prime goal of education, which is to seek and disseminate the truth."

2. College of San Mateo

The response of the president of the College of San Mateo to the black student demands contained a section called Rationale, in which he affirmed his commitment and that of "the Board of Trustees, administration, (and) staff . . . to the continuance of the College Readiness Program." He also pledged to continue the processes established at

the college for "critical inquiry and self-examination that lead to meaningful change." This process requires "the active consideration and involvement of students, faculty and administration . . ."; it is not "the prerogative of a single individual or a single group." Moreover, "threats, physical abuse, or other actions that inhibit the normal operation of the college will not be tolerated." On the touchy question of employment of staff, the president emphasized that "this faculty and administration will . . . discharge their responsibilities in recommending to the Board of Trustees the employment of specific individuals." Although advice and counsel of others would be sought, "responsibility for making the final decision (would) not be delegated."*

Another section, Student Responsibilities, contained two paragraphs touching on the specific issues raised in the student confrontations. The first paragraph stated that private meetings with student guards to restrict attendance would not be tolerated and the second, that only the head of the College Readiness Program, in concert with the College President, could act as spokesman for the Program. A third paragraph made reference to the importance of the passage of a bond issue the following month (the issue failed), and a fourth was a warning to those "who disrupt or interfere with the normal operations of the College" that they would be "subject to criminal or civil actions and suspension or expulsion from the College."

3. San Jose City College

In his letter to the president of the Black Student Union, the president of San Jose welcomed the "expressed desire to discuss these issues (demands) in detail" and invited him "to call . . . any time to talk about these

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*College of San Mateo. "Minutes of a Joint Meeting Between Faculty Senate and Administration." October 16, 1968.

or other problems."* In a memorandum to the faculty describing the disposition of the demands, the president announced he was taking measures to prevent interference with or disruptions of classes. To the memorandum he attached sections of the Education Code regarding student control and faculty responsibility.**

4. San Bernardino Valley College

In March 1969, the president of San Bernardino Valley College announced that he was "impressed with the conduct of all parties" during a particularly troublesome week. He also pointed out that "mutual respect and concern for the individual student and his educational advancement . . . flourished" on a foundation of "the rule of reason and trust in each other," but he warned the militants that he was "determined to have peace" on the campus.

On April 29, 1969, after a small fire in the Campus Center, the president, in an "Open Letter to the College Community," made it"very clear to our students that, should there be any demonstration or seizure of buildings, the leaders and participants will be held responsible and will be subject to disciplinary action under established procedure." So that there would be no misunderstanding, he added:

> To put it more bluntly, the College will protect with all appropriate means the rights and safety of all students, faculty, and staff, and will resist with all appropriate means the seizure of any of its facilities or flagrant abuse of its rules.

5. Compton College

At Compton College (California), forbearance marked the president's attitude. From January 1969 to the end of the semester, the Black Student Union and other black

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*Letter dated December 14, 1967.

**December 29, 1967.

students kept the college in a constant state of uneasiness. In a memorandum "to be read in all classes and distributed to all students," the president stated:

> The administration and Board of the College wishes to make quite clear that it feels it has gone to every effort to be fair and reasonable and understanding but it will not allow the continuation of disruptive activities at this college.
>
> The college intends to take immediate action against any kind of activity outside the bounds of the acceptable processes which have been set up. (June 9, 1969.)

6. Harrisburg Area Community College

A hard-line strategy was followed at Harrisburg Area Community College when black student leaders prevented two deans from entering a meeting of a student group known as SOUL. The deans were concerned by the presence of two students with rifles. The rifles, although the deans could not know it, were not loaded. One of the deans called the city police, who arrested two of the SOUL leaders and the two students with the guns. To avoid violence, the president closed the college at one o'clock for the Thanksgiving holiday. When criticized by black community leaders for his "overreaction," the president replied, "I cannot condone either symbolic or overt violence on campus." Despite the criticisms and pleas for clemency, the Board of Trustees supported the president and the dean of students, who suspended the four students, pending a hearing before the Student-Faculty Discipline Committee. They also refused to reinstate the suspended students, insisting that "the democratic process as exemplified by the student disciplinary system should not be bypassed." To do so, they claimed, would undermine the system and make it impossible in the future to enforce rules and regulations (8). The administrators took the same attitude toward pleas for intercession in the court

proceedings. Incidentally, the students claimed that the rifles were brought in to illustrate a lecture on "Means the Black Man Has Used to Gain His Freedom" (7).

Part II: The Formal Responses to the Demands.

Regardless of the strategy employed, hard-line and soft-line presidents gave serious consideration to the demands of the black militants. They responded to them in formal communications, usually addressed to the leader of the student organization. Sometimes a president responded at a meeting or convocation of faculty and students. In several instances, written agreements between the president and the black student leaders resulted from formal negotiations.

Throughout the country a response pattern evolved, following almost invariably the format in which the demands were presented. If the demands were numbered, the replies were numbered; if they were lettered, the responses were lettered. Any variations in the form of the demands were reflected in the presidents' responses. This point is mentioned to substantiate the observation that the presidents seriously considered the black student demands.

As mentioned earlier, in their responses to the demands, the presidents often accompanied them with statements sympathizing with the students' desire to improve their position and offering to help them redress the grievances that had led to the campus disturbances and the presentation of the demands. A few, however, were unable to conceal their annoyance. Some presidents, even among those who acceded to the demands, accompanied their answers with warnings or threats of disciplinary action if the students persisted in disrupting classes or disturbing the conduct of business in the offices. A surprisingly large number of presidents seemed eager to placate the black militants on nearly every request or demand. Only a few defied the militants by refusing to accede to any

of the demands. Of course, even those most sympathetically disposed did not accede to all of the demands.

The relative success of black student activism may be attributed to three major factors: (1) the administrator's fear of violence, (2) the possibility that violence might lead to a race riot, and (3) the willingness of black students to resort to violence to obtain concessions. Administrators were not unique in their fear of violence. Throughout all segments of society, this fear overhung the relations between the blacks and the dominant whites. Within police departments, the teaching profession, unions, and the military services, tension existed. Blacks not only demanded equality of treatment but they were also ready to fight for it.

These factors explain the extraordinarily careful and respectful attention administrators gave to the demands of black militants. By contrast, the white militants or the regular student body officers rarely received comparable attention to their demands or requests. Though administrators did not welcome demonstrations of the Students for a Democratic Society or the New Left, the demands of these students did not create in their minds (nor could they result in) the specter of race riots. White students, moreover, could not present the bill of grievances that the black students could, and theirs, after all, were the grievances of white students against white administrators. Occasionally, violence did accompany an SDS demonstration, but since its control or suppression could not be associated with race, the administrators took a harder line toward the white leaders than they did toward black leaders. And black militants, aware of this difference of treatment, took advantage of the administrators' fears in presenting their demands, often in a most insulting and arrogant manner.

Some administrators expressed surprise that all was not well on their campuses; others revealed insights into the underlying causes of the campus disturbances. Most

important as an augury for the well-being of the campus and the nation in the area of race relations, some administrators made tremendous efforts to bring about better understanding among the various groups both on the campus and in the community.

In describing the presidents' responses, we will also mention the methods used to keep the faculty, students, student body officers, the board of trustees, and/or other groups informed. These will usually follow the demands and the responses. In most illustrations, only certain demands will be used, but the selections will represent most of those made.

On December 12, 1967, the president of San Jose College received six demands from the Black Student Union chairman, including an ultimatum for their implementation by January 2, 1968. Two days later the president replied to the chairman under the following headings:

1. Your request for a "Black Press" subsidized by the administration
2. Your request for office space on campus
3. Display of Negro Heritage Library
4. Scholar-in-Residence
5. Black curriculum
6. Apprentice program*

The president's response to demands 1, 2, and 6 are reproduced in part:

1. The College administration does not presently subsidize any other student publications on campus, nor is it legal for us to do so. Your organization has

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*Otto Roemmich, Superintendent/President; To: Mr. Bill Calhoun, Chairman, Black Student Union. December 14, 1967. Mimeo, 3 p.

access to the same facilities as other student groups for the purpose of publicizing your organization's activities. These facilities, which include materials and a mimeograph machine, are located on the second floor of the Student Union. Use of these facilities for your group is subject to the same College rules as apply to all other organizations. We encourage you as well as other student groups to use these facilities for the promotion of your activities.

2. Because of the crowded conditions on our campus, many of our faculty members do not have adequate office space. No other student organizations are provided with office space except the Associated Student Body officers. All student groups, including yours, are provided space for the purpose of holding properly scheduled meetings.

6. Our College policy does not condone discrimination in any matters related to the total College program. Even though we have no specific evidence that discrimination exists in these programs, the College feels obligated to request the assistance of outside agencies in conducting a thorough investigation of the entire apprenticeship program.

Under State law selection of students for apprenticeship programs is the responsibility of the industry's joint management-labor apprenticeship committees, which are an arm of State government. Since allegations of discrimination in these apprenticeship programs have been submitted to us, we intend to register these allegations with the California Apprenticeship Council and with the Human Relations Committee of San Jose and if necessary with the State FEPC. This we will promptly do. The recommendations of investigating agencies will be carefully considered and appropriate action taken by the College. It is our sincere intention to deal with each issue raised fairly, sympathetically, and in accordance with the law. If upon investigation it is found that the practices followed are not in accord with College philosophy, we would request that practices be changed to conform or we would need to seriously consider the

> further participation in these programs by the College. If allegations cannot be substantiated, I would support the College's continuing its current programs but would request that the advice and counsel of the College administration be sought relative to selection of students in the program.

In this concluding paragraph, the president welcomed the "expressed desire to discuss these issues in detail" and invited the BSU chairman to call on him at "any time to talk about these or other problems . . . ."

When the faculty returned from the Christmas recess, they received a memorandum from the president outlining the disposition of the six requests and a statement of policy. Four of the requests had been discussed and resolved; the fifth, pertaining to the black curriculum, had been referred to the appropriate departments for study and recommendation in accordance with normal procedure; and the sixth, relating to the apprentice program, was deferred for study, since the matter was only partially under the jurisdiction of the college. Later, the Board of Trustees did take action "upon advice of legal counsel to refer the charge of discrimination to the State Division of Apprenticeship Standards."

The statement of policy advised the faculty not to deny students "the right to open and free discussion as long as the educational program is not interrupted." The president added, however, that if anyone attempts "to interfere or disrupt your class or otherwise interfere with the normal operation of the College, we ask that you immediately notify the administrator responsible for your area." Attached to the memorandum were extracts of the Education Code relating to student conduct.*

The president of Fresno City College of the California State Center Junior College District found himself in the position of having promised to answer the demands of the

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*Memorandum To: All Day and Extended-Day Faculty; From Otto Roemmich, Superintendent/President. December 29, 1967. 3 p.

Black Student Union and being confronted with a directive from his district administrators not to answer demands until they and the Board of Trustees had developed procedures. Since he had made the commitment before the issuance of the directive, he proceeded to respond to the demands. His procedure was similar to that of others--listing each demand followed by his response--but his responses reflected a sympathetic attitude toward the activists. For example, instead of denying outright the students' demand for participation in the selection of black instructors, he promised to make "an investigation . . . to identify legal methods by which Black students may participate in the screening of applicants to teach in the Black studies program." Instead of an indignant and outraged rejection of the demand for the "Restriction of Police and Special Agents," he replied calmly, almost apologetically:

> The College is designed to function with minimum involvement of police and other law-enforcement agencies. There is, however, need for some security, especially during evening hours, to provide for the protection of College equipment and campus facilities. In times of emergency, involving the safety of individuals, there is, of course, the obligation of the College to call for police assistance."*

The president also sent a copy of his Response to the president of the Associated Students, urging her and the Student Council to study the issues raised in the demands and welcoming "any comments or recommendations that the Council may wish to make."**

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*"Response to Black Student Union Demands." Clyde C. McCully, President, Fresno City College. May 12, 1969.

**Clyde C. McCully to Miss Bonnie Calvert, May 12, 1969.

On April 10, 1969, the president of El Camino College received a list of eighteen demands and an insulting postscript, in which the student leaders accused him of "foot shuffling," announced that the demands were "in no respect vague, in no respect unattainable, and in no respect negotiable," and demanded that, by April 30, 1969, he present "verifiable proof that the demands have been met or are in the process of implementation."*

In the president's answering memorandum, he listed first a brief summary of each demand and then his response. Two examples of the answers show the format:

> Demand No. 2. Immediate implementation of relevant courses of education as listed . . .
>
> Response. A list of your demands indicates that you would expect to have immediate implementation of approximately twenty-five (25) new courses of study. In view of the enrollment of approximately two hundred fifty (250) Black students, and even assuming that many white students would wish to take these courses, the request is unreasonable. At the present time, the Afro-American Advisory Studies Committee (with sub-committees on Afro-American Literature; Literature of American Ethnic Groups; Afro-American Music; Speech-Theatre; Speech; Physical Education; and Psychology) is working on the development of Afro-American courses of study in these areas. Courses recommended by the committee, working with the sub-committees, may be added to the El Camino curriculum through the standard process from the Divisions of the College through the General Curriculum Committee.

Demand No. 18 and the president's response are reproduced in full because they illustrate the truculence of the black

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*El Camino College "Black Students Union Demands," signed by four officers of the BSU, April 10, 1969. (The demands were reproduced in Gardena Valley News, April 17, 1969.)

student leaders, the accommodations the college was making on their behalf, and the recognition the black student leaders acquired as spokesmen in negotiating with the president.

> Demand No. 18. An immediate end to "Tokenism" (whether it is in the form of part-time employees, low-paying jobs for students, or one class in Black History) and a beginning of concrete verifiable action to bring about the above demands. If these demands are not met within the time allotted by the Black Student Union, then the struggle will escalate to a more aggressive level. This is not to be construed as a threat, but as a statement of fact. The motto of all Black Student Unions is "Any means necessary!"
>
> Response. The faculty, staff, and administration of El Camino College have been working diligently to improve the educational environment of this institution and to meet the changing needs of the community. We shall continue to work to this end in order that the needs of Black students, as well as all others, will be met.

In January 1969, the Black Student Union and the Administration of El Camino College set up two committees to implement communication and to promote a viable working relationship between the two groups. One of these was a committee composed of the leadership of the Black Student Union and the president and vice presidents of the College. It was to meet monthly and discuss all problems of mutual concern. Through this committee, a list of new positions for 1969-1970, both certificated and classified, as authorized by the Board of Trustees, was delivered to the leadership of the Black Student Union. Additionally, an informal exchange of views on a number of topics important to both groups was carried out. Another committee was organized under the leadership of

Mrs. Joanne Roberts and Mr. John Moehlman to work with the Black Student Union in the development of new curricula. Through this committee, contacts with faculty groups were made and the planning of new curricula was begun.

> We believe that the best interests of both the Black Student Union and the El Camino College community would be enhanced by a continuation of these meetings. We urge the Black Student Union to continue to operate through these channels. We are ready to continue to give these committees our active support.*

The President of Los Angeles Southwest College mailed his written statement to the President of the Black Student Union. Responses to three of the Thirteen Demands--reproduced here--represent a less accommodating posture than most:

> 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT STUDENT, FACULTY, ADMINISTRATOR BOARD TO SCREEN ALL INCOMING TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS TO INSURE THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO RELATE TO THE NEEDS OF THE STUDENT BODY AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY. REVIEW BOARD INCLUDES HIRING AND PROBATIONARY EVALUATION.
>
> As an officer of the Los Angeles City Board of Education, I am bound to observe the rules of that organization and administer the College in accordance with these rules. It is the prerogative of the Board of Education and its designated officers to select staff.

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*Memorandum dated April 28, 1969. To: Black Student Union; From: Stuart E. Marsee, President, El Camino College; Subject: Demands of the Black Student Union Received April 10, 1969. Enclosures: Policies 6125 and 5135. CC to Aniece L. Amos, Communication Secretary, Yolanda-Marie Marshall, Member, BSU, James Robinson, Central Committee Chairman, Leonard Young, Minister of Information.

9. IMMEDIATE CONSTRUCTION OF WALKWAYS

Dr. Snipper is at work on this project and hopes to bring about its early implementation.

10. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ON-CAMPUS SPEAKERS PROGRAM TO DEAL WITH SUCH SUBJECTS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE STUDENTS TO BE PAID FOR BY STUDENT BODY FUNDS TO BE CHOSEN BY THE STUDENT BODY

The establishment of a campus speakers program can be done under existing Board rules.*

Formal negotiations between the black student leaders and the president and his staff took place in several colleges. At Chicago Southeast College the president, the dean of the faculty, and two instructors negotiated a signed agreement with the black student leaders ending a boycott of classes. The demands, with the responses, reveal the success of the students. This was only one of several such agreements negotiated during the spring 1969 semester at this and other Chicago colleges.

> 1. We demand the employment of a black financial aid officer now.
>
> RESPONSE: He is hired, and will begin duties next Monday.
>
> 2. We demand that all students in the Advanced Placement Program be dropped now.
>
> RESPONSE: The Advanced Placement College Transfer Program will be dropped on June 5. High school students will be allowed to fill empty spaces in the technical and vocational programs only after college students have completed registration. At least 50 per cent of these students will be recruited from schools with predominantly black enrollments.

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*Memorandum to: Mr. Tommy Miles, President, Black Student Union; From: John A. Grasham; Subject: Student Demands. December 31, 1968.

3. We demand the installment of a black studies department now, not an expansion of the black studies program.

RESPONSE: A coordinator of black studies will be appointed next week.

4. We demand black teachers in the humanities department.

RESPONSE: The humanities department is authorized to proceed immediately to recruit black faculty.

5. We demand that something be done about the racist practices in the nursing department.

RESPONSE: This charge is untrue, unfortunate, and in the committee's opinion, should not have been made. The administration and faculty recognize, however, the necessity of working out, in cooperation with students, a fair procedure for investigating and resolving the grievances of students with faculty, administration or institution.

6. We demand amnesty for students who participate in the demonstration.

RESPONSE: This point had been agreed upon by the faculty last Friday. No punitive action in connection with the settlement of the boycott will be taken.*

Several agreements were also negotiated at Seattle. A press release on May 8, 1969, announced:

> Seattle Community College officials reached an agreement with Frank A. Williams, Chairman of the college Black Student Union, Friday on procedures for central campus planning.

In a memorandum to "all students, faculty, and staff" on May 13, the president of the College stated that:

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*Office of Public Information. News Release, March 11, 1969.

> I am inviting Mr. Williams and Mr. Davis (BSU leaders) to submit names of their nominees for the City Center Advisory Committee, . . . to present . . . a priority listing of courses and programs, and to meet with me again to evaluate these proposals.

Although the later negotiations with the Black Student Union leaders were carried on with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and not with the president, the following illustrations are included because they reveal the power exerted on a community college by the black militants.

On May 20, 1969, Arthur Siegal, Chairman of the Board, issued a statement in which he announced:

> The Board of Trustees and the administration of Seattle Community College, District #6, have negotiated intensively and in total good faith with representatives of the SCC Black Student Union in an attempt to structure a Central Campus Citizens' Council that will provide maximum involvement and responsibility for the planning and operation of the Central Campus of the College.
>
> An agreement between the Board and the BSU was reached on Wednesday, May 14, at 5:10 p.m. and the terms of the agreement were publicly announced. The members of the Board and the officers of the BSU expressed their satisfaction with this innovation in city college administration.

Again, on May 27, 1969, in a press release, Chairman Siegal stated:

> Negotiations which ended at 4:00 this morning have resulted in the announcement that one of the college's five Board members . . . has submitted his resignation to the governor . . . . Everyone involved in the 13-hour mediation session was impressed with the sincerity of the BSU representatives.

Chancellor's Responses. In districts with two or more colleges, the superintendent or chancellor often negotiated with the militants either by direction of the board, on his own initiative, or when students bypassed the college president. At Kennedy King City College (Chicago), the demands for the removal of the president and the transfer of a social science instructor accused of racism could only be effected by the chancellor. After a short occupation of a building and the cancellation of classes, the chancellor reached an agreement with the black students, replacing the white president with a black and transferring the instructor to the central office (1).

At the South Campus of Macomb County Community College District, the district president, instead of the executive dean of the college, responded to the demands. After a series of confrontations at the college and at board meetings, and at the request of the trustees, the president prepared a statement concerning the demands of the Association for Black Students, in which he outlined a policy and answered the five goals or demands presented to the board. (The statement is described on p. 7.)

Black Presidents' Reactions. Most black presidents have been appointed during the last five years. In the sense that the white presidents they replaced were its casualties, they may be considered the beneficiaries of activism. Dr. Charles G. Hurst, President of Malcolm X College in Chicago, is one of the most vocal and articulate. In speeches and writings, he sympathizes "unequivocally with efforts to revolutionize education and eliminate racism as a factor in all institutions that shape and control the lives of our young people." Moreover, he contends that "the authentic role of education is the liberating of all people, the eliminating of all injustice, and the convincing of black people of their essential

educability, worth, and humanity." He is convinced that research by black scientists will dispell much of the ignorance about black failures in schools and reveal the true causes to be, not lack of native endowment, but psychological deficiencies induced by poverty and the conversion of "the school setting into a psychological prison for the black students." Without mentioning the researchers by name, he calls attention to the "marginally competent professionals," whose reports on the black community are "of dubious quality and based on assumptions that cannot stand conscientious scrutiny and analysis." His thesis is that "the problem is racism; the answer is its elimination" (3).

At the dedication ceremony for the new site of his college, Dr. Hurst considered the overriding concern of the college to be "the complete liberation of the Black community and its inhabitants from the shackles of economic exploitation and political oppression." The primary goals of the college are:

> 1. Admission, education and graduation of the maximum number of students from our community--Black, Spanish-speaking, and poor whites who also recognize the intrinsic values of a Black-oriented curriculum
>
> 2. A curriculum that provides for humanizing those who participate and prepares them to play an effective role in bringing about revolutionary change in this society.*

Dr. Norvel Smith, president of Merritt College since August 1, 1968, considers the intense interest of activist students in education "the most significant thing about today's student revolution." His response to the

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*Malcolm X College, President's Newsletter, 2:1, October 20, 1969.

students' criticisms of the educational setting is to make "the students, rather than the faculty and administration, the primary unit of education." Students should be involved in the selection and evaluation of faculty and administrators, employed as teaching assistants, given primary responsibility in the administration and operation of student enterprises, and permitted to participate in developing experimental colleges administered apart from the traditional college bureaucracy. Although Dr. Smith's analysis and suggestions are framed in a lower key than Dr. Hurst's, they are no less far-reaching in their implications for the future of education (12).

Another recently appointed black president, Dr. William Moore, Jr., of the Seattle Community College, vented his feelings in his book, Against the Odds (5).

Subsidence of Black Student Activism in 1969-70. Except on a few campuses, the disturbances did not continue into the 1969-70 college year. Black student organizations were active, but rhetoric replaced conflict as the weapon of its leaders. The reasons for the calm puzzled presidents as much as it relieved them.

This is not the place to analyze the causes or contributing factors that brought peace, uneasy though it may be, but a short statement is in order. Exhaustion and waning interest in confrontation politics probably had more influence than administrative strategy on the peaceful condition. Among other contributing factors were the many concessions made in response to the black student demands, the removal of discriminatory racial practices, and the increased awareness and sensitivity of presidents to the black students' search for self-esteem and racial affirmation (2). Of minor importance were punitive laws and regulations for control of student disturbances.

At times during the 1969-70 college year, it seemed to presidents that black student activism would be succeeded

by more aggressive Mexican-American and Puerto Rican activism and the re-emergence of radical activism, but, until the Cambodian incident and the Kent State tragedy, none of these made much headway. Nor did junior college students, including the blacks, play more than a minor role in the national anti-Vietnam mobilization days of October and November 1969 and in the anti-war demonstrations and riots that erupted during the spring of 1970 (9). Earth Day and Survival Week teach-ins and demonstrations evoked considerable enthusiasm, but the Women's Liberation Front failed to arouse more than amused concern.

On some campuses, the most serious threat to peace was the conflict between Arab and Jewish students over issues relating to the Near East warfare. Black students played a minor role during the May disturbances caused by either Cambodia or Kent State. The Jackson State College incident, involving the death of black students, went almost unnoticed on community college campuses. Despite all these developments, it would be a mistake to assume that black student activism has disappeared from junior college campuses. It is only in abeyance. Its possible resurgence haunts presidents. A more even balance in the control of colleges with significant black enrollments will help alleviate the situation.

Conclusion. No one should expect a miracle from the new black presidents emerging in urban community colleges. They have as little control as white presidents over the major social forces contributing to the unrest among blacks. What can be expected is that most of them will bring to the colleges a greater sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of black students than is possible among whites. They will have a positive impact on the self-image and motivation of the students. They will be able to "penetrate the social barriers that have deeply rooted cultural foundations" (6:10).

That black presidents are determined to play a

greater role in the development of community colleges was made clear at the March 1970 convention of the American Association of Junior Colleges. After a caucus, black presidents and administrators succeeded in having President Charles G. Hurst, Jr., of Malcolm X College elected to the Board of Directors, the first black in the Association's fifty-year history. On May 26, 1970, Crisis in the Country: Statement by Black Junior College Leaders was drafted at the headquarters of AAJC and distributed to editors and writers by its Director of Minority Group Programs.

There is the danger that white presidents may be lulled into a deceptive sense of serenity by the new strict laws and regulations on student conduct and responsibility. Already some are reverting to their old ways, relaxing their search for black instructors and their commitment to the introduction of black studies courses or revision of the standard courses to include the black experience.

This review of the reactions of presidents, the great majority of whom were white, indicates that they treated the demands of black students with respect, that they made significant adjustments in hiring black employees and introducing black studies courses, that for the first time they became aware of the intensity of feeling of their black students and realized that the urban college was taking on many of the characteristics of the urban communities. The junior college has become a community college in ways that few of them ever considered when they first began talking about the relationship of the college to the community.

How much presidents have learned from the experience of the late Sixties will be determined during this decade. Perhaps presidents will heed Santayana's often-quoted adage that those who ignore history will be forced to repeat it.

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